



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

August 25, 2021

Mr. Joe A. Esparza
Deputy Secretary of State
State Capitol Room 1E.8
Austin, Texas 78701

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
2 PM O'CLOCK

AUG 25 2021

Secretary of State


Dear Deputy Secretary Esparza:

Pursuant to his powers as Governor of the State of Texas, Greg Abbott has issued the following:

Executive Order No. GA-39 relating to prohibiting vaccine mandates and vaccine passports subject to legislative action.

The original executive order is attached to this letter of transmittal.

Respectfully submitted,


Gregory S. Davidson
Executive Clerk to the Governor

GSD/gsd

Attachment

Executive Order

BY THE
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF TEXAS

Executive Department
Austin, Texas
August 25, 2021

EXECUTIVE ORDER
GA 39

*Relating to prohibiting vaccine mandates and vaccine passports
subject to legislative action.*

WHEREAS, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, issued a disaster proclamation on March 13, 2020, certifying under Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) poses an imminent threat of disaster for all Texas counties; and

WHEREAS, in each subsequent month effective through today, I have renewed the COVID-19 disaster declaration for all Texas counties; and

WHEREAS, I have issued a series of executive orders aimed at protecting the health and safety of Texans, ensuring uniformity throughout Texas, and achieving the least restrictive means of combatting the evolving threat to public health; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 vaccines are strongly encouraged for those eligible to receive one, but have always been voluntary for Texans; and

WHEREAS, I issued Executive Orders GA-35 and GA-38, addressing COVID-19 vaccines administered under an “emergency use authorization” by prohibiting vaccine mandates from governmental entities and by prohibiting “vaccine passports” from governmental entities and certain others; and

WHEREAS, subsequently, on August 23, 2021, while the legislature was already convened in a special session, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved one of the COVID-19 vaccines for certain age groups, such that this vaccine is no longer administered under an emergency use authorization for those age groups; and

WHEREAS, while this COVID-19 vaccine is now FDA-approved for certain age groups, others are not yet approved and still are administered under an emergency use authorization; and

WHEREAS, through Chapter 161 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, as well as other laws including Chapters 38 and 51 of the Texas Education Code, the legislature has established its primary role over immunizations, and all immunization laws and regulations in Texas stem from the laws established by the legislature; and

WHEREAS, in other contexts where the legislature has imposed immunization requirements, it has also taken care to provide exemptions that allow people to opt out of being forced to take a vaccine; and

WHEREAS, given the legislature’s primacy and the need to avoid a patchwork of regulations with respect to vaccinations, it is appropriate to maintain the status quo of

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prohibiting vaccine mandates through executive order while allowing the legislature to consider this issue while in session; and

WHEREAS, in this instance, given the legislature's prior actions, maintaining the status quo of prohibiting vaccine mandates and ensuring uniformity pending the legislature's consideration means extending the voluntariness of COVID-19 vaccinations to all COVID-19 vaccinations, regardless of regulatory status; and

WHEREAS, I am also adding this issue to the agenda for the Second Called Session of the legislature that is currently convened so that the legislature has the opportunity to consider this issue through legislation; and

WHEREAS, I will rescind this executive order upon the effective date of such legislation;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Texas, do hereby order the following on a statewide basis effective immediately:

1. No governmental entity can compel any individual to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. I hereby suspend Section 81.082(f)(1) of the Texas Health and Safety Code, and any other relevant statutes, to the extent necessary to ensure that no governmental entity can compel any individual to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.
2. State agencies and political subdivisions shall not adopt or enforce any order, ordinance, policy, regulation, rule, or similar measure that requires an individual to provide, as a condition of receiving any service or entering any place, documentation regarding the individual's vaccination status for any COVID-19 vaccine. I hereby suspend Section 81.085(i) of the Texas Health and Safety Code, and any other relevant statutes, to the extent necessary to enforce this prohibition. This paragraph does not apply to any documentation requirements necessary for the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine.
3. Any public or private entity that is receiving or will receive public funds through any means, including grants, contracts, loans, or other disbursements of taxpayer money, shall not require a consumer to provide, as a condition of receiving any service or entering any place, documentation regarding the consumer's vaccination status for any COVID-19 vaccine. No consumer may be denied entry to a facility financed in whole or in part by public funds for failure to provide documentation regarding the consumer's vaccination status for any COVID-19 vaccine.
4. Nothing in this executive order shall be construed to limit the ability of a nursing home, state supported living center, assisted living facility, or long-term care facility to require documentation of a resident's vaccination status for any COVID-19 vaccine.
5. This executive order shall supersede any conflicting order issued by local officials in response to the COVID-19 disaster. Pursuant to Section 418.016(a) of the Texas Government Code, I hereby suspend Sections 418.1015(b) and 418.108 of the Texas Government Code, Chapter 81, Subchapter E of the Texas Health and Safety Code, and any

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other relevant statutes, to the extent necessary to ensure that local officials do not impose restrictions in response to the COVID-19 disaster that are inconsistent with this executive order.

This executive order supersedes only paragraph No. 2 of Executive Order GA-38, and does not supersede or otherwise affect the remaining paragraphs of Executive Order GA-38. This executive order shall remain in effect and in full force unless it is modified, amended, rescinded, or superseded by the governor. This executive order may also be amended by proclamation of the governor.



Given under my hand this the 25th
day of August, 2021.

Handwritten signature of Greg Abbott in black ink.

GREG ABBOTT
Governor

ATTESTED BY:

Handwritten signature of Joe A. Esparza in black ink.

JOE A. ESPARZA
Deputy Secretary of State

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